

REMARKS

Claims 3-6 and 9-12, indicated as being allowable by the Examiner, remain pending in the application with the present amendments. Claims 1-2 and 7-8, which were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,035,037 to Chaney et al. ("Chaney"), are cancelled herewith.

By the present amendment, claims 3, 6, 9 and 12 are amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 2 and 8 from which they formerly depended. Minor changes are made to the language of the claims merely for the purpose of assuring agreement between the recitations in each of the pending claims. This does not alter the subject matter that is recited in the claims. Claims 4-5, and 10-11 are allowable at least because they depend from claims 3 and 9, respectively. Accordingly, applicant submits that the present amendments place the application in condition for allowance.

An Information Disclosure Statement is submitted herewith requesting the Examiner to make of record European Patent Publication No. EP 0 562 295 A1 that is referred to in *Chaney*.

As it is believed that all of the rejections set forth in the Official Action have been fully met, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that he telephone applicant's attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which he might have.

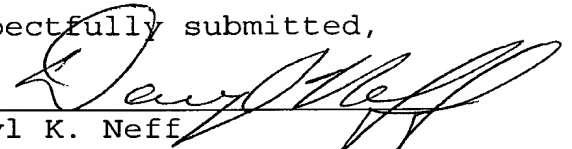
Application No.: 09/917,976

Docket No.: SONYJP 3.0-194

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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Respectfully submitted,

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